

REMARKS

The specification has been reviewed, and clerical errors of the specification have been amended.

In paragraph 2 of the Action, claims 1, 2, 4, 7 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hoshi et al. or Yamauchi et al. In paragraph 3 of the Action, claims 1 and 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by JP '079. In paragraph 4 of the Action, claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoshi et al. or Yamauchi et al. In paragraph 5 of the Action, claims 3, 5 and 6 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

In view of the rejections and indication of allowability, claims 1-3, 6, 8 and 10 have been amended, and new claim 12 has been filed. In particular, claim 1 has been amended to clarify the structure of the invention, and claim 3 has been amended in independent form. Claim 10 has been amended to a dependent form from claim 1. Now, the patentability of claim 1 will be explained below.

As clearly recited in amended claim 1, the automatic document feeder of the invention includes an apparatus frame for the automatic document feeder, first and second transport means, a curved reading path, a reading guide unit, and support means.

In the invention, the reading guide unit including as one unit first and second guide members and a transparent film member is formed separately from the apparatus frame. The support means is formed on the apparatus frame and the reading guide unit for detachably attaching the reading guide unit as one unit to the apparatus frame.

In Hoshi et al. or Yamauchi et al., an original document feeding apparatus 1 is placed and attached to a scanner 2 through legs 34 and shafts 35. In the feeding apparatus, as shown in Fig.

6, a delivery tray 39 is fixed to an outer housing 210, and a feeding tray 3 is rotationally attached to the outer housing 210. Also, in Figs. 38(a) and 38(b), a transparent sheet 28 is attached at a front end to a flap 213, which is fixed on the delivery tray 39 (Fig. 6), and is placed on the delivery tray 39 at a rear end. In view of Fig. 3, the outer housing 210 can open relative to the scanner 2 together with the feeding tray 3 and the delivery tray 39, and the feeding tray 3 can open relative to the outer housing 210.

In claim 1, the support means is formed on the apparatus frame and the reading guide unit for detachably attaching the reading guide unit as one unit to the apparatus frame. Numerals 34, 35 referred to in the Action are legs and shafts for attaching the feeding apparatus to the scanner 2, not attaching the delivery tray 39 to the housing 210. The delivery tray 39 for holding the flap 213 and the transparent sheet 28 is immovably fixed to the housing 210. Namely, the legs 34 and the shafts 35 referred to as the support means do not support the transparent sheet 28 and its supporting structure.

Therefore, Hoshi et al. or Yamauchi et al. do not have the supporting means of claim 1. Claim 1 now amended is not anticipated by Hoshi et al. or Yamauchi et al.

In JP '079, an original carrying device includes upper and lower guides 31, 32 at an inlet side, and upper and lower guides 51, 52 at a discharge side. A transparent sheet 16 is arranged between the lower guides 32, 52. In claim 1, the support means is formed on the apparatus frame and the reading guide unit for detachably attaching the reading guide unit as one unit to the apparatus frame. Although JP '079 includes the lower guides 32, 52 and the transparent sheet 16, it is not disclosed that the guides and the transparent sheet are formed as one unit, and that the support means is formed on the support frame and the guide unit. Therefore, claim 1 of the invention is not anticipated by JP '079.

As explained above, claim 1 is patentable over the cited references.

Reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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